REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-81. Claims 36-43 and 77-81 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 7, 19, 21, 23, 25, 34, 35, 44, 50, 60, 62, 64, 66, 75 and 76 are hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 7-9, 18-33, 44, 45, 50-52 and 59-74 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Obradovich et al. (U.S. Patent 6,330,497), while claims 3-6 and 46-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over this reference. Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 44 in order to distinguish the present invention over the cited art. Dependent claims 7, 19, 21, 23, 25, 50, 60, 62, 64 and 66 have been amended to accord with the amendment of the independent claims.

Amended claim 1 recites a display system for use in a vehicle, comprising a dashboard display having a graphic composition of user interface elements that can be altered by a processor. The claim has been amended to clarify that the processor is adapted to alter the graphic composition autonomously, in response to an event input indicative of an event or situation not initiated by the driver. The amended claim language finds literal support in the specification on page 5, particularly in lines 11-15 and 32-35. Alterations to the graphic composition of the display are defined in this context as changes in "the choice of graphic interface elements and/or the size or position of graphic interface elements appearing in the display."

The inventive feature recited in amended claim 1 is exemplified by Figs. 4 and 5, which show (in Fig. 5) the changes in the graphic composition of display 10 that may occur automatically upon receipt of an incoming phone call. In this example, several changes occur, as described in the specification on page 21, line 28, through page 22, line 7:

- An icon 120 and dialog box 130 are automatically added to the display (as per claim 3: "adding a graphic user interface element").

- Speedometer 65 and RPM meter 70 are minimized (claim 6: "changing the size of a graphic user interface element").
- Indicators 115 are moved (claim 5: "changing the position of a graphic user interface element").
- Alternatively or additionally, buttons could be deleted from the screen (claim 4: "removing a graphic user interface element").

These changes take place autonomously, without involvement of the driver, except to the extent that the driver may have previously input his or her preferences to the processor (claims 27-29).

Other examples cited in the specification of events or situations not initiated by the driver include changes in the engine oil level or temperature (page 18, lines 5-12); opening of a rear door or an unexpected change in the position of a side view mirror (page 19, lines 13-15); and receipt of an e-mail or traffic alert (page 21, lines 22-24).

Obradovich describes a multimedia information and control system for use in a vehicle. When the user wants to access information about a given part or accessory of the automobile, the user is presented with options on a display screen. When the user selects or activates one of the options, its highlight color on the screen changes, and retrieved information is presented to the user both in text and in voice (col. 3, lines 52-67). User selections cause the system to display different screens, as illustrated in the figures. All changes in the display screens occur in direct response to user interactions (col. 5, lines 37-52, as cited by the Examiner). Obradovich neither teaches nor suggests that his system might autonomously alter the graphic composition of the display in response to an event or situation not initiated by the driver, as required by amended claim 1.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 as amended is patentable over the cited art. In view of the patentability of claim 1, claims 2-9 and 18-33, which depend from claim 1, are believed to be patentable, as well.

Claim 44, as amended, recites a method for displaying information regarding operation of in-vehicle devices, including the steps of receiving an event input indicative of an event or situation not initiated by the driver, and modifying the graphic composition of a display autonomously responsive to the event input. As argued above in reference to claim 1, Obradovich neither teaches nor suggests this combination of steps. Therefore, amended claim 44 is also believed to be patentable over the cited art, as are claims 45-52 and 59-74, which depend from claim 44.

Claims 10-17, 36-43, 53-58 and 77-81 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Obradovich in view of Opel (U.S. Patent 5,555,502). Claims 36-43 and 77-81 have been canceled. In view of the patentability of amended claims 1 and 44, as argued above, claims 10-17, which depend from claim 1, and claims 53-58, which depend from claim 44, are believed to be patentable over the cited art.

Claims 34, 35, 75 and 76 were objected to for depending from rejected base claims, but were deemed to recite allowable subject matter. Applicant has amended these claims to stand as independent claims, incorporating all the limitations of the base claims and intervening claims from which they previously depended. Amended claims 34, 35, 75 and 76 are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicant has studied the additional references made of record by the Examiner, and believes that the claims currently pending in this application are patentable over these additional references, whether the references are taken individually or in any combination.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner.

In view of these amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Notice to this effect is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: December 3, 2003

S. Peter Ludwig
Reg. No. 25,351
Attorney for Applicants

DARBY & DARBY, P.C.
805 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
212-527-7700